GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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© John D. Whiting

BY DESERT LAW, COFFEE IS KING AMONG THE SHEIKS

Ethiopians going to Mecca carried coffee to Arabia, where it became so popular as to earn a name from the Arabian port of Mocha. Among the desert-dwelling Bedouins of Trans-Jordan, it takes the center of the stage in any act of hospitality. It appears first in a ceremonious roasting over a fire in a large iron spoon, then is pounded to powder with wooden mortar and pestle, and finally boiled in a pot of hand-hammered copper or brass. The clear coffee is poured off the dregs into a series of successively smaller pots, each time being boiled again, until the resulting beverage is reduced to an essence. In the small handle-less cups, it is served unsweetened except for the flavor of coriander seed (Bulletin No. 4).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Turku Now Finland's Leading Winter Port

RECENT bombing raids over southern Finland have repeatedly extended as far to the west as Turku, or Åbo, as it is called in Swedish. The city is situated at the southwest corner of the country. Why do planes from the Soviet Union fly across the entire width of Finland to reach this objective?

Standing at the junction of the Gulf of Bothnia, the Baltic Sea, and the Gulf of Finland, Turku is valuable as a military base and source of supplies in war, and as a trading center in peace. In summer, its imports are normally listed as second in volume only to those of the country's leading port and capital, Helsinki. In winter, when the ice-blocked Baltic slows Helsinki's shipping, Turku takes the lead. Its harbor is kept open by icebreakers.

Finland's Largest Center for Shipbuilding and Tobacco Factories

Since the outbreak of the present Russo-Finnish war, the western merchant city has been cited as an important port of entry for war materials. The harbor and the mouth of the Aura River, which flows through the city (illustration, next page), are guarded by a string of islands extending to the vital Åland Island group which reaches across the Gulf of Bothnia's entrance to within 25 miles of Sweden's coast.

Moreover, Turku is the site of the largest machine works and shipyards in the country, turning out battleships and vessels for commercial shipping.

As an industrial center, the city operates cotton and woolen mills, sugar refineries, china factories, iron and metal works, and the largest tobacco factories in Finland. Shipping and manufacture together support 73,000 inhabitants, making Turku the nation's third largest city.

From the port, transportation lines radiate across southwestern Finland. Three railway lines spread from there, and their business is supplemented by highways, river shipping on the Aura, and coastal shipping. In normal vacation seasons, it is a favorite terminus for the tourist trade, which arrives by sea, highway and airline. Planes provide daily service from Stockholm between June and October.

Once Capital City Under Sweden

Turku was made the capital of Finland in the 12th century—a position held during the long period of Swedish domination that ended with the transfer of Finland to Tsarist Russia in 1809. By the end of the 14th century this city had become one of the foremost traders of the northern seas. With the special privilege of dealing with foreign lands, restricted by Swedish law at one time to Stockholm and Turku only, it enjoyed considerable prosperity during the heyday of the Hanseatic League. The early German influence of this merchant League—so strong in Turku in the late Middle Ages that many of the city's old documents bear German names—is still reflected in modern commercial statistics. For much of Germany's trade with Finland normally passes through Turku, as the nearest shipping point to ports of the Reich.

In foreign trade generally, Turku long has held a leading position in the nation's economy. Close to Sweden, it was for centuries a transshipping point for goods moving between that country and Russia. Some interesting items of Turku's export trade during the 16th century were wooden butter tubs, spoons, and bowls.

In modern times, normal export trade bound for world markets by way of

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Photograph by Luigi Pellerano

WITH BARELY 6,000 PEOPLE, ALBEROBELLO NEVERTHELESS HAS MORE TRULLI THAN ANY OTHER TOWN IN THE WORLD

Although only a minor station on the railroad from Italy's southern port of Bari, this town is the "capital city of trulli land." Throughout the Puglia region of southeastern Italy, farmers build domelike houses of which even the roofs are stone—houses of a distinctive pattern called trulli. But Alberobello is a city of such farm houses. In spots, the more modern boxlike architecture of traditional city dwellings shoulders the trulli aside. On market days the trulli dwellers from the countryside bring their produce and livestock in two-wheeled carts to "Trulli-town" for sale (Bulletin No. 5).

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"Once-in-a-Lifetime" January Moved Arctic to Sunny South

PEOPLE who habitually talk about the weather really had something to talk about last month, for January turned the weather map of the United States upside down. While venturesome roses bloomed in Alaska, the Fountain-of-Youth city of Florida, St. Augustine, blossomed with icicles from frozen garden hose.

The Teachers College at Fitchburg, Massachusetts, had to import 21 truckloads of snow in order to celebrate their annual winter carnival. Meanwhile, small Texans in Galveston and San Antonio were throwing snowballs for the first time in their lives. Los Angeles looked at the thermometer and reported the warmest January maximum in five years. Charleston, South Carolina, although farther south, dug out from under the coldest month on record.

Canada's Cold by High-Pressure "Special Delivery" to Gulf of Mexico

The inveterate how-come askers rushed to their weather maps to see why these January climates had been delivered to the wrong addresses. They saw three things that explained why Ketchikan, Alaska, registered a heat wave of 39 degrees, while Dallas, Texas, reported a mere 8 degrees above zero. The significant three factors were a low-pressure area in the tropical Pacific, a long high-pressure area stretching from Point Barrow across Canada and the United States to the Gulf of Mexico, and another low-pressure area in the North Atlantic south of Greenland.

The Pacific low-pressure area was moving balmy tropical breezes in a counter-clockwise direction up the coast of California to the coast of Alaska. The North Atlantic low-pressure area was moving polar air in a counter-clockwise direction into New England, but polar air that had lost its icy chill on a long journey over the Atlantic's unfrozen water.

The big high-pressure area, on the other hand, stretching its frigid length diagonally across the entire continent, moved polar air in a clockwise direction from northwestern Arctic Canada directly to the southeastern United States and the "land of cotton." This straight-from-Canada air was further refrigerated by traveling almost the entire distance over snow-covered regions, gathering momentum for its icy blitzkrieg against the Mason-Dixon Line. The resulting atmosphere, fresh from the North Pole, pushed southern thermometers down to new lows. Louisiana shriveled under the most prolonged cold spell yet recorded in the State. Florida, the perennial asylum of refugees from winter, had the most severe freeze in a quarter-century, and launched a fad of fur bathing suits. Southern Virginia had a taste of being snowbound. General Winter marched across Georgia with havoc that might have put Sherman to shame, and Atlanta fell again before a "Yankee" attack of record-breaking snow.

Rabbits Gnaw Trees and Vegetables Die by the Ton

Ordinarily Chesterfield, Canada, shivers in weather 50 to 100 degrees colder than San Antonio, Texas. One of January's startling turnabout tales was that the Texas city was colder than the Canadian spot by three degrees. Vicksburg, Mississippi, was seven degrees colder than Angmagssalik, Greenland; Galveston, Texas, one degree colder than Atlantic City.

The "dislocated" weather, bringing balmy southern latitudes a northern severity for which they were unprepared, contributed to the nation's winter-casualty list of 400 deaths. Among them, a North Carolina former slave who had endured more than a hundred winters succumbed to January. Ol' Man River stopped all other shipping and carried a heavy freight of ice past the wharves of Natchez.

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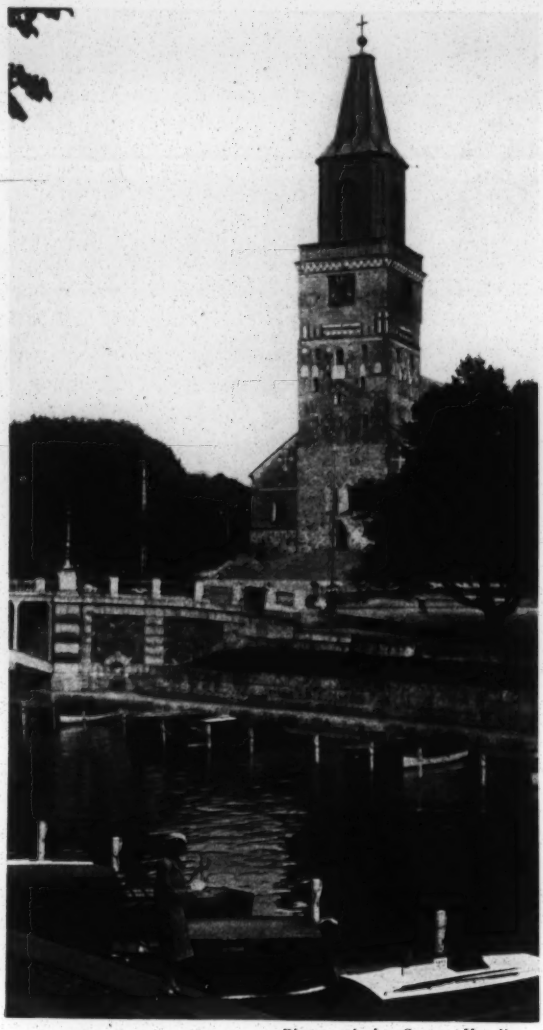
this city is chiefly in timber, pulp, minerals, skins, and farm and dairy products. Imports include coal, pig iron, salt, oil, cotton, and machinery.

While the name Turku in ancient Finnish dialect means "market place" or "trading port," this city also ranks high among the nation's historic centers as a cradle of Finnish culture. There in 1640 was founded the old Åbo Academy, removed to Helsinki after the latter city became the Finnish capital under the Russian tsars. At present, Turku has two universities, one Swedish, the other Finnish, established in 1918 and 1922 respectively.



Photograph by Gustav Heurlin

TURKU'S "WESTMINSTER" COMMEMORATES FINNISH FIGHTERS

Changed from 13th century Catholic to 20th century Lutheran, the Cathedral is steadfast in honoring the nation's warriors. The chapel to the left of the entrance is called the Sharpshooters'. Other chapels commemorate a 17th century cavalry hero and a general in the Thirty Years War. The massive tower's height is only 19 feet less than the cathedral's length. The Cathedral Bridge (left) crosses the Aura River.

Although it was the first city to rise in the province known as "Original Finland," modern Turku holds few physical reminders of its long history. Of interest to visitors have been the medieval castle and the Cathedral, built by the conquering Swedish Crusaders in the 13th century. Like most other Finnish towns, where construction was chiefly in wood, it has suffered such ravages of fire and warfare as to require frequent rebuilding.

Note: A map showing the location of Turku, as well as descriptive material and photographs of other places in Finland, will be found in "Farthest-North Republic," *National Geographic Magazine,* October, 1938; "Looking Down on Europe Again," June, 1939; and "Flying Around the Baltic," June, 1938.

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "Finland's Karelian Isthmus Is Europe's 'Hottest' Battleground," January 29, 1940; "War Loss Closes Finland's Back Door to the Ice-Free Arctic," January 8, 1940; and "United States Befriends Friendly Finland," October 30, 1939.

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Belgrade, Where Balkan Leaders Sought Continued Peace

FEW world cities have seen more of warfare than the Yugoslav capital, Belgrade, where representatives of Romania, Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia met recently to discuss means of safeguarding their neutrality status. So stained with blood has been the life story of Belgrade that historians have suggested calling it the "Red" instead of the "White" City, as its name signifies.

On Path of Trade—and Trouble

Situated at the junction of the vital Danube and Sava rivers, Belgrade (Beograd) long has held a prominent place astride one of Europe's main highways, both for trade and trouble. As the "key to the Balkans," it has been tossed back and forth between conquerors for more than 2,000 years.

In turn the Illyrians, Celts, and Romans first won, then defended, its site. Its succession of battered fortresses felt the impact of attacks, by Huns, Goths, Greeks, Turks, Bulgarians, Hungarians, and Austrians. Conquerors of East and West fought there. Christians and Mohammedans contested for it. The Turks had a name for the embattled city—"Home of wars of the faith."

At the beginning of the World War, Belgrade, then capital of Serbia and situated on the country's northern frontier, received the first shots of the conflict, when the Austrians bombarded it across the Danube on July 29, 1914. It was captured by the Central Powers early in the war, and re-taken by the Serbs, only to fall again to the Germans and Austrians for an occupation that lasted until the Armistice. Shells, shrapnel, and incendiary bombs poured into Belgrade destroying more than 700 buildings, while most of its population fled with the government, to hinterland refuge.

Added to the distress in the World War fighting was an epidemic of typhus —remindful of the Black Plague in this same Danube region which seven centuries earlier had wiped out legions of Crusaders.

Capital of Post-War Nation of Yugoslavia

With the shifting of Balkan boundaries following the war, Belgrade became the capital of a vastly enlarged territory, the new Yugoslavia, which combined the former areas of Serbia, Montenegro, and a half-dozen or more of the neighboring Austro-Hungarian provinces.

It is no longer directly on the frontier, but it is still precariously located for a capital—only 50 miles, in air-line distance, from the Romanian border, 100 miles from Hungary, and a little more than 100 miles from Bulgaria.

This central position, which makes Belgrade vulnerable in war, serves on the other hand in peacetime to promote the city's importance as a trade and communications center. The hub of a network of roads and railways, it is linked, by peace time air service, with all European capitals. London is only a day's flight away.

In the past 30 years, Belgrade's population has jumped from less than 70,000 to nearly 300,000. Through it today passes a large share of the nation's foreign trade. It is a port of call for 6,000 river vessels, plying the Danube from Vienna to the Black Sea.

New and modern buildings have risen in the city to challenge its picturesque but sagging old houses, and wide, well-paved streets now are replacing most of the ancient and congested cobblestone lanes.

Situated near supplies of coal for fuel, Belgrade in recent years has added

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Knoxville saw the Tennessee River freeze over for the first time in forty years. Tropical fish washed up dead on Florida beaches indicated that the cold wave had rolled out over the ocean. Hunters in Kansas reported shooting jack rabbits in trees, presumably eating bark while snow covered their normal food on the ground.

Frost in the orange blossom belt, ice over the bayous, and snowdrifts where cotton is normally piled high have disarranged more than the thermometer's mercury. Fruit and vegetable markets, freight and truck shipments, and employment have felt the winter's blow. New York onion-growers collected higher prices because Texas onion crops were frostbitten. Prices climbed on lima beans, peppers, peas, beets, and tomatoes in northern cities because southern fields were frozen. Sugar cane, oranges and grapefruit, lettuce and cabbage (illustration, below) were damaged in Florida, Texas, Louisiana, and Georgia. Growers in Mexico, Cuba, and Puerto Rico hastened to ship their produce into the United States, while refrigerator cars on southern railway sidings stood empty. Southern ferns and flowers that normally would fill northern florist shops were nipped in the bud. Field workers by thousands were unemployed because January harvested their fields.

Farther north, South Carolinians extinguished a fire with snowballs. Frozen water mains forced the populace of Ashland, Virginia, to drink melted snow "sterilized" with iodine. Oyster men whose boats were caught in the ice on Chesapeake Bay got out and walked home. Isolated Chesapeake Bay islands received supplies delivered in Arctic style by an airplane equipped with skis.

Note: Some of the southern States whose economic and social life has been temporarily disrupted by recent weather extremes are described in the following: "South Florida's Amazing Everglades," *National Geographic Magazine*, January, 1940; "Highlights of the Volunteer State" (Tennessee), May, 1939; "Charleston, Where Past and Present Meet," March, 1939; "The Texas Delta of an American Nile," January, 1939; "Machines Come to Mississippi," September, 1937; "Patriotic Pilgrimage to Eastern National Parks," June, 1934; "Smoke Over Alabama," December, 1931; "Louisiana, Land of Romance," April, 1930; "Florida—The Fountain of Youth," January, 1930; "Marching Through Georgia, Sixty Years After," September, 1926; and "Motor-Coaching Through North Carolina," May, 1926. See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "The 'Land-Poor' Rich Land of the South," October 17, 1938.

Bulletin No. 2, February 9, 1940.

Photograph by B. Anthony Stewart

WINTER MADE A JANUARY *PUTSCH* INTO THE TEXAS CABBAGE PATCHES

Applying an insecticide "powder puff" to each cabbage head, the workmen in the picture demonstrate the special techniques used to protect Texas fields from ordinary hazards such as looper worms. But freezing January was an extraordinary enemy, and damage to crop is reflected in higher prices on the markets and menus of distant northern cities.

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Coffee: a War Refugee

WITH coffee substitutes flooding the market in Germany and a coffee shortage already pinching the grocers of France, Rome has this month made coffee plenty a peace symbol. When the ban on coffee, previously general in Italy (except in Vatican City), was lifted on February 1, at 12:01 A.M., Italians lingered past midnight in cafés of Rome to have a cup of the genuine article as a gesture of defiance to war shortages elsewhere.

The stagnation of trade currents in warring countries affects the coffee business among the first, shutting down markets for the leading branch of international commerce in beverages. The world produces annually enough of the aromatic beans to give more than two pounds to every human being on earth.

More than three billion coffee trees, three-fifths of all there are in the world, are busily yielding coffee in Brazil's cool uplands, and 38 or more other countries and colonies are adding to the world crop.

An Ethiopian Immigrant That Made Good in the Americas

Coffee is an immigrant from ancient Ethiopia that made good in the New World. On the highlands of the old African kingdom recently conquered by Italy coffee trees have grown wild since early times, named for the province of Kaffa.

Legend says the stimulating properties of coffee were discovered by a priest who noticed that goats refused to take their ordinary rest after eating coffee berries. From Ethiopia coffee crossed the Red Sea to Arabia, then traveled to Java, and finally came as a "vegetable immigrant" to the Americas.

There coffee's real success story began. Like many human immigrants, coffee made good in the New World to an extent far beyond anything ever dreamed of in its home country. South America became its greatest producer, and North America its greatest consumer. In the 1938-39 crop year, Brazil alone grew approximately 68 per cent of the world's coffee production, and the United States used half of all the coffee consumed in the world.

Most of Leading Producers in New World

But the world in recent years has consumed far less coffee than it has produced, and coffee's success story has changed lately to a tale of woe. With Brazil's own production increasing (illustration, next page), with other countries planting coffee trees to compete with her, and with purchasing power declining, coffee prices have dropped. Hoping to improve the situation, Brazil began destroying part of her crop, burning surplus coffee by the ton.

In the crop year of 1938-39, Brazil alone produced 21,873,000 bags of coffee. (The standard bag of coffee weighs 132 pounds.) Production in the rest of the world during that crop year was 10,144,000 bags. Leading coffee producers, next to Brazil, are Colombia and the Netherlands East Indies, with Venezuela, Guatemala, and El Salvador appearing as the next three on the list.

Coffee trees thrive best on land from 1,000 to 4,000 feet above sea level in the tropics. They are evergreen, and blossom two or three times a year. Coffee blossoms are pure white and fragrant, and the berries are dark red, very much like cherries. The coffee "bean" of commerce is the seed of this berry. After the berries are harvested, the pulp is removed, leaving the seed that is later roasted to prepare it for the coffee pot.

Strangely enough, the leaves of the coffee tree contain more caffeine, the stimulating alkaloid found in coffee, than do coffee beans. In some regions, for this reason, a sort of "coffee tea" has been made from coffee leaves.

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considerably to its manufacturing activities, with plants that turn out such assorted products as beer and glue, boots and candy, machinery, textiles, and soap.

Note: See also "Kaleidoscopic Land of Europe's Youngest King," *National Geographic Magazine*, June, 1939; "By Sail Across Europe," May, 1937; "Jugoslavia—Ten Years After," September, 1930; "The Danube, Highway of Races," December, 1929; "From England to India by Automobile," August, 1925; and "Looking Down on Europe," March, 1925.

Bulletin No. 3, February 19, 1940.

Photograph by Edgar S. Aldrich

SIGHTSEERS ARE SIGHTS TO SEE IN BELGRADE

Although Yugoslavians in Yugoslavia's capital, these girls practically announce by their dresses, "I'm a stranger here myself." Shawls, high shoes, elaborately embroidered bodices and aprons are features of the costumes of the country folk who come to the city on market days.

BINDERS FOR GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

A special binder for GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS which will hold thirty issues (a complete year's edition) is now available. This fabrikoid holder consists of a handsomely embossed brown cover, with spring jaws which grip hard and hold fast one, two, or any number of BULLETINS up to a full year's allotment. When one of the BULLETINS is required elsewhere, release is immediate, replacing equally easy, while other BULLETINS remain undisturbed and unmarred.

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Puglia No Longer the "Thirsty Land" of Italy

COMPLETION of the world's longest aqueduct has recently brought life-giving water to the entire region of southeasternmost Italy, Puglia, formerly known as the "thirsty land."

Work on Puglia Aqueduct, which now stretches a network of pipelines for nearly a thousand miles, was first started in 1908, after 40 years of discussion and planning. It brings a constant flow of water from the moisture-laden western slopes of the Apennine Mountains to more than 300 communities of the dry east. Engineers have diverted a stream from its bed to the aqueduct, forcing it through a system of tunnels running through the heart of the barrier mountains. The 2,500,000 inhabitants will now receive a daily supply of 158 quarts per person.

"Heel" of the Italian "Boot"

The region of Puglia, covering an area of 7,442 square miles, is the most easterly section of Italy. On the map it appears as the "heel" of the Italian "boot," a slim peninsula thrust between the Adriatic and Ionian Seas toward the former kingdom of Albania. At its nearest point, it is only 47 miles—across the Strait of Otranto—from the little Balkan nation which fell, on Good Friday of last year, before the Italian invasion.

From Puglia comes much of Italy's agricultural produce, including wine, tobacco, and olive oil. Olive trees grow especially well in the lime-rich soil of this area. Two-fifths of all the productive land of the region, it is estimated, is occupied by olive groves. Almonds and figs are also grown.

In addition to its agricultural value, Puglia is significant also for its important seaports and naval bases. Busy in the Albanian and Dalmatian coastal trade is modernized Bari, on the Adriatic, which in recent years has made considerable improvements in harbor facilities. Ancient Brindisi, also on the east coast, facing Albania across the Strait of Otranto, is another active Italian port, its harbor having been deepened during the World War when it served as a naval base. Strategically located on the western side of the Puglia peninsula, where the Gulf of Taranto cuts a high "arch" in the foot of the Italian "boot," Taranto is Italy's second-ranking military depot and naval base, following Spezia in importance.

Peasants in "Beehive" Homes

One unusual aspect of life in this part of Italy is found in the beehive-shaped homes of the peasants. Known as trulli, these houses are made of limestone, which abounds in the region, dotting the brown soil with white outcroppings. All over rural areas of Italy's "heel," the trulli raise their high domelike heads. Walls of the stone cottages are sometimes seven feet thick, keeping out the heat in summer, keeping it in in winter.

Puzzling to visitors is the "dry" construction of these houses, put together without mortar or cement or keystone support (illustration, next page). The secret, however, is simple, since builders chisel their materials so that each stone in the dome of a trullo is flat and wedge-shaped, fitted with the others, and laid circle-wise in an ascending and diminishing spiral.

Rich and poor alike live in these oddly formed homes, the differences lying chiefly in size and interior decoration. The more pretentious houses have several of the cone-shaped rooms, each an independent unit, usually added as the family and its fortunes progress.

In a single small district of the Puglia region are nearly 2,000 examples of

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Because of the stimulating properties of coffee, it was classed as an intoxicant among certain strict Mohammedan sects, such as the Senussites, and therefore was forbidden to them. But coffee nevertheless increased in popularity among other Moslems, especially in Arabia, and became as closely identified with Arabia as is tea with China (illustration, cover). In 17th century England the beverage was greeted dubiously. A physician of the period commented: "I allow Coffee is excellent Medicine, but the best medicine may become Poyson when over-used."

Until the close of the 17th century, practically all of the world's supply of coffee came from Yemen, in southern Arabia. The name of Mocha, a Yemenite seaport, became a synonym for coffee. Later, coffee culture spread to Java, which for a time led in production; its name also became a coffee-equivalent word.

Note: Photographs and descriptions of coffee, from plant to beverage, are found in the *National Geographic Magazine*. Some of the more recent of these references are: "As São Paulo Grows," May, 1939; "Hawaii, Then and Now," October, 1938; "Bonds Between the Americas," December, 1937; "Pearl Fishing in the Red Sea," November, 1937; "Bedouin Life in Bible Lands," January, 1937; "Guatemala Interlude," October, 1936; "Haitian Vignettes," October, 1934; "Modern Ethiopia," June, 1931; "Gigantic Brazil and Its Glittering Capital," December, 1930; "Among the Hill Tribes of Sumatra," February, 1930; and "Through Java in Pursuit of Color," September, 1929. See also in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS: "Coffee Once Used Only as Medicine," December 7, 1931.

Bulletin No. 4, February 19, 1940.

Photograph by Luis Marden

NOT A DRINK IN A TABLE LOAD FOR THE COFFEE SAMPLER

Battalions of coffee cups, sometimes 600 a day, pass in review before the expert taster, who sits still and revolves the table to each of its 26 cups in turn. He sips from all, swallows nothing. His sipping decides what coffee is bought in Santos, Brazil.

the bizarre human "beehives" of stone. These houses, however, are characteristic only of the country landscape. With the exception of Alberobello (illustration, inside cover), towns and cities in this section of Italy generally follow the more conventional architectural forms of lines and angles.

Brindisi, the ancient Brundisium, was a settlement of some importance 2,200 years ago. Construction of the *Via Appia* (Appian Way) in the 2nd century B.C., from Rome to the southeastern port, gave it a prominence it has never entirely surrendered. Serving as a point of contact for shipping to the east, it was the place where Virgil disembarked from his last voyage; he died there in 19 B.C. It was later a stop-over for shiploads of Crusaders in the Middle Ages, bound from Europe for battle against the Moslems of the Holy Land. But Brindisi was as near the Holy Land as many of the Crusaders reached; they died in droves in the Italian port, of fevers and other diseases induced by the unendurable conditions on their crowded ships. It is still a point of departure for extensive shipping to Italian colonies in Africa.

Note: Additional material about Puglia will be found in "Horace—Classic Poet of the Countryside," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1935; "The Perennial Geographer" (Virgil), October, 1930; and "The Stone Beehive Homes of the Italian Heel," February, 1930.

Bulletin No. 5, February 19, 1940.

Photograph by Luigi Pellerano

TRULLI BUILDERS PUT STONE TO GOOD USE FROM GROUND TO ROOF TOP

The domed roofs of the trulli, built of tiers of wedge-shaped flat stones, are supported by stone walls sometimes as much as seven feet thick. Although trulli were originally round, in the town of Alberobello their lower walls are squared off so that the unusual houses fit conveniently into rows. The strips of stone across the street are not for stairstep aid in climbing, but for miniature bridges, which trulli dwellers cross without getting feet wet after rains.

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